

the reader more about Nietzsche than it does Jesus? Yet that being the case, cannot the same be said of Benson's reading of Nietzsche, taking as it does an interpretive line? In short, given that Benson eschews the historical Nietzsche for an interpretation, does his account not tell us more about Benson than it does Nietzsche? Accordingly one should ask: what shape does Benson's Nietzschean piety take?

One can read Benson one of two ways. On the one hand, as the title suggests, this book offers a theology of instinctual piety concerned with the heart rather than the head; a post-metaphysical theology which links Nietzsche's affirmation with life to Jesus bodily resurrection. Drawing on the recent work of the materialists Slavoj Žižek and Alain Badiou, Benson celebrates Nietzsche's ecstatic overcoming as a Pauline 'love beyond the law' which affirms life beyond the death of imperial Rome – although it is far from clear whether Žižek reads Paul in precisely this way. In short, Benson reads Nietzsche through Christianity in an affirmative way, and not simply in the mode of suspicion as is usually the case. On the other hand this is a theology which risks being subsumed under Nietzsche's death-of-God; hence Benson enlists two atheist materialists to read Paul. And it is not insignificant in this regard that in his conclusion Benson gives the final word to a letter signed by Nietzsche as 'the Crucified'. Because by giving the final word to the crucified Christ this theology risks becoming the very thing it remains so critical of; i.e. a decadent theology which privileges death over resurrection. I leave it to the reader to determine where the emphasis falls.

That said this book is enormously well written and insightful making it a crucial book for undergraduates and post-graduates alike (Benson provides one the clearest descriptions of genealogy as critique). It offers a concise account of Nietzsche's thought and his principle interlocutors, and a highly imaginative contribution to the reception and advancement of Nietzsche's work which deserves to be read by philosophers, theologians, and musicians alike.

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*Nietzsche and Rée: A Star Friendship.* By Robin Small. Pp. xxiv, 247, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, £21.00.  
*Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of History.* By Christian J. Emden. Pp. xvi, 386m Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, £50.00.

The past decade has seen a refreshing increase in philosophically sophisticated engagements with Nietzsche's thought. While earlier writers portrayed Nietzsche as primarily concerned with issues of aesthetics, both in the subjects he wrote about and in his writing style, more recent writers have shown that Nietzsche is, in fact, making philosophically interesting arguments about issues in ethics, language, and metaphysics that do not evaporate into a hazy artistic temperament. These new perspectives on Nietzsche advance on two fronts. Philosophers such as John Richardson, Bernard Reginster, and Lanier Anderson have clarified Nietzsche's arguments, demonstrating the continuing interest they hold for philosophers today. On the second front, which is where Emden and Small's work can be located, intellectual historians have provided thickly textured accounts of Nietzsche's relationship with his contemporaries and with the philosophical tradition.

Emden is self-conscious about the role he wants his work to play in redirecting Nietzsche scholarship. He attempts to link the philosophical and the historical fronts of this movement: the first half of his book provides a wonderfully rich account of German intellectual and political history in the second half of the nineteenth century, while the second half is primarily exegesis of selected Nietzsche texts relevant to politics and history. Emden's account of German intellectual life is detailed and engaging, tracking the political struggles (both within and outside the academy) of Nietzsche's teachers and colleagues. From a discussion of Nietzsche's 'neo-humanist' boarding school to his studies in Leipzig and Bonn to his early career at the University of Basel, Emden tracks how the atmosphere of German intellectual life informs Nietzsche's philosophical positions. The close textual study of Greek and Latin that Nietzsche learned and practiced was understood to be very much a part of German *Bildung*: the 'freedom' and 'harmony' of the ancient world offering an alternative to the fragmentation and authoritarianism of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century German states. Nietzsche was critical of this narrative, and Emden argues that his criticism was fueled by his growing philosophical interests. Encountering Schopenhauer and Lange stoked Nietzsche's epistemological skepticism, and Lange's work in particular introduced Nietzsche to the sort of critical naturalism that he would later develop. In Basel, Nietzsche encountered the work of his colleague Jacob

Burckhardt, which furthered Nietzsche's commitment to non-teleological historiography. In public lectures at the Basel city museum, where Burckhardt regularly attracted large audiences, Nietzsche attempted to return to German neo-humanism before it was contaminated by association with German Imperialism, and the latter's attendant technocracy.

Emden is conversant with recent Anglo-American scholarship on Nietzsche and with French and German scholarship, with historical as well as philosophical scholarship (these somewhat uncomfortable conjunctions are on display in the title of his fifth chapter: 'Genealogy, naturalism, and the political'). This is sometimes stimulating, sometimes frustrating: the former, for example, when Emden cleverly links Nietzsche's discussion of 'the body' with naturalism; the latter, for example, when his attempts to classify types of naturalism with gestures towards the work of John McDowell, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and Edmund Husserl come off as hollow. But the promise of Emden's endeavor is manifest in his final chapter, which makes the intriguing suggestion that there is a quasi-cosmopolitan turn in Nietzsche's work, a turn towards a political ideal of Europe. Against the background of German academic culture that Emden has so richly explored, this interest in Europe can be understood as a way of reinvigorating certain neo-humanist ideals while stripping them of what Nietzsche considered the worst of German Imperialism. Emden likens Nietzsche's political vision to those of Burke and Tocqueville, critical of unrestrained (though not all) democracy while praising an open-textured notion of moral community, even if these sentiments remain vague in Nietzsche's own work.

Small, like Emden, is interested in Nietzsche's historical context, particularly the context of his naturalism. He pursues his inquiry by focusing on the relationship between Nietzsche and Paul Rée, the enigmatic Jew with whom Nietzsche and Lou Salomé were in an opaque but certainly very close relationship. Small carefully sorts through the historical record of Nietzsche's relationship with Rée, deflating popular sensationalism while bringing to light the importance of the relationship on Nietzsche's thought.

A period of intense discussions in Sorrento, Italy, in 1876–7, resulted in *Human, All Too Human* as well as Rée's *Origin of the Moral Sensations*. Rée never achieved the fame that Nietzsche did. After years attempting to secure a permanent academic post, he became a doctor, working in the community around his family's estate until his death in 1901, possibly a suicide. Small has recently translated and edited a collection of Rée's writings, but his major works remain untranslated and largely overlooked. Yet Nietzsche launched a powerful polemic against 'Rééalism'. Using unpublished correspondence and notebooks as well as published writings, Small sets out to examine why: was Rée a great thinker who has simply been overlooked, is Nietzsche expressing an anxiety of influence, or is there some other explanation?

Small shows that, while their friendship lasted, Nietzsche and Rée viewed each other as intellectual equals, and with considerable admiration. They were concerned with similar issues and addressing them in similar ways. Both Nietzsche and Rée were grappling with questions of style, and both produced collections of aphorisms as a result of their reflections (this is a point where Small contends Rée influenced Nietzsche). A key point of intersection of their philosophical interests was a naturalist approach to ethics. Small shows how Nietzsche had been drawn to investigate the relevance of the natural sciences for the human sciences even in his student days (Emden also makes this point). But Nietzsche's early, Wagner-influenced work did not allow these interests to emerge in his published writings. They emerged with his encounter with Rée. But Nietzsche and Rée eventually took their naturalist approaches in different directions. Rée posited egoism and altruism as two basic drives motivating every human. The words 'good' and 'bad' simply abbreviate 'beneficial to others' and 'harmful to others'. While Nietzsche was sympathetic to this approach, in *Beyond Good and Evil* and *On the Genealogy of Morals* he focuses on the use of moral language in domination and social control as well as the 'herd instinct'. As his split with Rée solidified, the will to power took a central role in Nietzsche's thought, and his criticisms of Darwinism intensified. To take but one example of how Small's work resonates with contemporary philosophical reflections on Nietzsche: John Richardson has argued that Darwinism and the will to power are two organizing principles in Nietzsche's work, but the former is secondary to the latter. Small's work demonstrates diachronically why this is the case. In this respect and others, Small and Emden provide rich historical detail that complements and strengthens the philosophical rehabilitation of Nietzsche.

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